

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00
PM-03 SP-02 INR-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 IO-06 SSM-01
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O R 061735Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2561
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2235

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, PLO
SUBJECT: SYRIA REAFFIRMS NECESSITY FOR SPEEDY IMPLEMENTATION
OF CAIRO AGREEMENT

REF: A. DAMASCUS 2218; B. BEIRUT 1526

1. WE CAN WELL UNDERSTAND CONFUSION OF LEBANESE FONMIN BUTROS
RE SYRIAN THINKING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORDS (REF B).
BUTROS IS CORRECT IN STATING THAT BAATH COLUMNIST AMID AL-KHULI
IN APRIL 3 COLUMN WROTE THAT SETTLEMENT OF QUESTION OF SOUTH
LEBANON AND REBUILDING OF LEBANESE ARMY SHOULD PRECEDE
IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEBANESE
AUTHORITIES AND PALESTINIAN COMMANDOS. KHULI ARGUED THAT
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UNDER THAT AGREEMENT LEBANESE ARMY IS CHARGED WITH CARRYING
OUT THE ACCORD IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMANDO MOVEMENT.
REF A REPORTED, HOWEVER, THAT ON
APRIL 5, SAME COLUMNIST BACKED OFF FROM APRIL 3 EDITORIAL
WHEN HE STATED THAT IMPLMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORD AND
REBUILDING OF LEBANESE ARMY GO HAND-IN-IN-HAND AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF ONE SHOULD NOT BE CONDITIONED ON THAT

OF THE OTHER. HE THEN FURTHER BACKPEDALED STATING THAT STIUATION IN SOUTH "BECAUSE OF ITS DIMENSIONS AND INTRICACIES IS HINDERING RE-CONSTRUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY, THIS SHOULD NOT PREVENT IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORD. HE STATED, "AS LONG AS THE PROCESS OF BUILDING THE ARMY IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN, IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT IS REQUIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SINCE IT IS NOT ONLY COMPLEMENTARY TO RE-CONSTRUCTION OF THE ARMY BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT IS AN ARAB RESOLUTION TO WHICH BOTH PARTIES TO THE CRISIS, PRES. SARKIS AND THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE, HAVE BEEN COMMITTED AND HAVE PLEDGED TO IMPLMENT AT THE RIYADH SUMMIT HELD LAST OCTOBER."

2. APRIL 6 SYRIAN PRESS ALSO CARRIED STATEMENT BY ASSEM KANSO, HEAD OF LEBANESE BAATH PARTY AND A MAN WHO TAKE HIS LEAD FROM DAMASCUS, STATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO AGREEMENT MUST BE EXPEDITED. HE DECLARED: "FIRST ARBITER OF HOW AGREEMENT TO BE IMPLEMENTED IS PRES. SARKIS." HE ADVOCATED USE OF ADF FORCES TO ENFORCE AGREEMENT PENDING RECONSTRUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY.

3. THAWRA EDITORIAL SAME DAY CHARGED ISRAEL WITH CONTEMPLATING AGRESSION IN SOUTH LEBANON AND CONCLUDED WITH CALL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT, "WHICH WILL LEAVE NO OPPORTUNITY TO ADVOCATES OF CONTINUED BLOKSHED IN LEBANON."

4. COMMENT: APPEARS THAT AL-KHULI EITHER MIS-CONFIDENTIAL

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UNDERSTOOD SARG DIRECTIVES ON APRIL 3 WHEN HE WROTE COLUMN ADVOCATING POSTPONEMENT IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO AGREEMENT UNTIL AFTER RECONSTRUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY, OR ELSE SYRIAN LEADERSHIP ITSELF DID QUICK ABOUT-FACE ON THE ISSUE. ALL COMMENTS IN MEDIA HOWEVER BEG THE QUESTION OF HOW CAIRO AGREEMENT SHOULD BE INTERPRETED. EVIDENCE OF NEW-FOUND SYRO-PLO COOPERATION AND REPORTED KUWAITI AND SAUDI SUPPORT FOR LENIENT INTERPRETATION OF ACCORD IN PLO'S FAVOR SUGGEST THAT SYRIA LIKELY TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING TOWARD PLO CONCERNS THAN WAS CASE MONTH AGO.

5. THE MEDIA BALANCING ACT OVER THE CAIRO AGREEMENT AND RECONSTITUTION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY MIRRORS THE CAUTION WITH WHICH SYRIA IS HANDLING ITS INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH LEBANON CONFLICT. IT REINFORCES OUR IMPRESSION (DAMASCUS 2208) THAT SYRIA MAY HAVE DECIDED ADMINISTER A WARNING TO THE CHRISTIAN EXTREMISTS DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS BUT HAS NOT EMBARKED ON A MAJOR SHIFT IN ITS ALLIANCES. DATT DAMASCUS IR 6 891 0140 77 (CONFIDENTIAL/NOFORN)

GIVES MOST AUTHORITATIVE READING OF SYRIAN ACTION IN
SOUTHERN LEBANON WHICH WE HAVE YET RECEIVED.
MURPHY

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NNN

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